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EU condemns antisemitism disguised as anti-Zionism

Ahead of Holocaust Remembrance Day, EU says it is determined not to let history repeat itself: "Our relentless collective efforts to combat antisemitism and to preserve the memory of the Holocaust, our resolve to stand up for peace, tolerance, and universal human rights will not cease nor falter," EU says.

by Ariel Kahana — Published on 04-27-2022 14:20 — Last modified: 04-27-2022 14:20



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen speaks during a media conference at an EU summit in Brussels, March 25, 2022 | File photo: AP / Olivier Matthys

The European Union issued a statement in honor of Holocaust Remembrance Day. In contrast with previous statements that sought to avoid tying antisemitism to Israel hatred, the EU admitted the two issues were connected.

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In the statement, the EU delegation to Israel and the 26 EU member-state embassies in Israel said they "solemnly commemorate today the memory of six million Jewish men, women, and children who were brutally murdered on European soil by the Nazis, their allies, and local collaborators during humanity's darkest moments.

The statement was issued by EU Ambassador to Israel and the ambassadors of all EU member-states represented in Israel, i.e. Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Calling the Holocaust "a dark, indelible stain on European history," the EU said that "while the horrors that were committed on our continent cannot be undone, we must keep working tirelessly to preserve the memory of the Shoah and to fight all attempts to deny, mystify, or distort the historical facts. We must and we will remain ever-vigilant as the specter of antisemitism rears its ugly head again."

As for the recent increase in antisemitism, the EU officials noted that "tragically, antisemitism continues to fester within our societies. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how old antisemitic prejudices can resurge, inspire new conspiracy theories, and generate hatred online and offline. Comparisons of health-related measures with the genocidal policies of Nazi Germany are unacceptable."

They said: "Antisemitic hatred has no place in our world, and it makes no difference if it is disguised as anti-Zionism or whether it comes from far-right or far-left extremists or from Islamist and other religious fundamentalists. We Europeans cannot – and will not – stay indifferent in the face of increasing antisemitism. Not this time. Not ever again."

"To combat the surge in anti-Jewish sentiment, the European Union last year unveiled its first-ever comprehensive strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life. It is an actionable plan with concrete proposals that earmarked millions of Euros for various projects to fight the hatred of Jews and to promote Holocaust remembrance and education. Member states will also pay special attention to countering any official or non-official attempt to deny or distort the historical facts regarding the responsibility of states and national or local authorities in the organization and implementation of the Holocaust. We will not stay idle in the face of rising anti-Jewish hate speech and violence. Every EU Member State pledged to present national strategies by the end of this year."

Turning to the conflict in Ukraine, the EU officials said: "Our hearts are filled with horror and grief about the suffering of millions of Ukrainians fleeing from the War of aggression waged against their country. The European Union and all its member states stand in solidarity with all innocent victims of this unnecessary war, including by opening our doors to all those trying to escape Russia's attacks. We will continue to provide strong political, financial, military, and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and its people. We condemn President Putin's and the Russian propaganda's ludicrous claims to be fighting "Nazis" in the Ukrainian leadership and to seek to "denazify" the country, which simply amounts to distortion and trivialization of the Holocaust."

It concluded: "It happened, therefore it can happen again... It can happen, and it can happen everywhere," Italian-born Holocaust survivor Primo Levi famously said in 1986. But we are determined not to let history repeat itself. Our relentless collective efforts to combat antisemitism and to preserve the memory of the Holocaust, our resolve to stand up for peace, tolerance and universal human rights will not cease nor falter."

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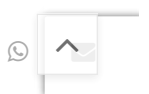
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French Jewish leaders exhale after Macron defeats Le Pen

"Le Pen's share of the vote was very high – and this means there is a lot of work to do," says CRIF leader Francis Kalifat.

by i24NEWS and ILH Staff — Published on 04-25-2022 18:27 — Last modified: 04-25-2022 18:27

A polling station official holds a ballot for Marine Le Pen as he counts ballots in Anglet, southwestern France, on April 24, 2022 | Photo: AP/Bob Edme

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"It's a relief to see that Marine Le Pen was blocked from reaching power – but this time we were seriously worried," said Francis Kalifat, head of the French Jewish body CRIF, *Haaretz* reported.



"We were concerned because some people... had made ambiguous statements, refusing to call on their supporters to vote for Macron," Kalifat added.



National Rally leader Le Pen's 41.5% was the highest ever reached by a far-right party in France.

Samuel Lejoyeux, head of the Union of Jewish Students of France, said that while he was happy with the results, it was no victory.

The main thing is that Marine Le Pen and her racist and antisemitic project have been kept out of the Élysée Palace, but the progress she has made is frightening," Lejoyeux warned.

Many Jewish voters were wary of Le Pen despite her efforts to change her image – which were referred to by some as "de-demonization," according to *Haaretz*.

Jewish leaders further argued that the only way to stop the rise of the far Right was to address the problems that drove so many to vote for Le Pen.

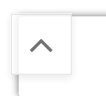
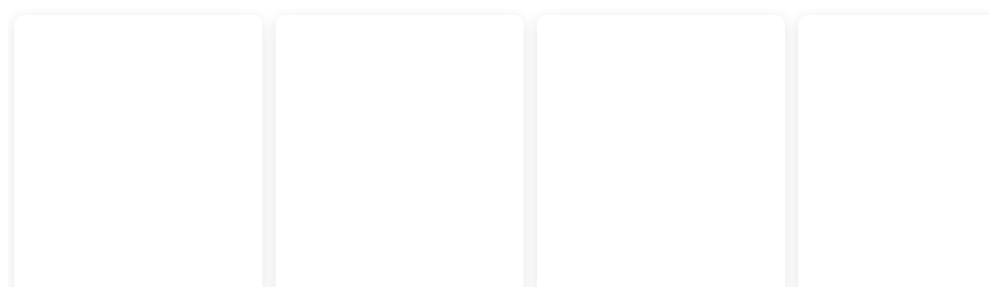
"Le Pen's share of the vote was very high – and this means there is a lot of work to do," said Kalifat.

Macron's Forward Party will head to the polls again in June for parliamentary elections, for which far-right figures like Le Pen vowed to build up their groups to win, *Haaretz* reported.

"A new battle begins now," Kalifat said.

i24NEWS contributed to this report.

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French leader Francis Kalifat is Macron compatible and does not reflect the political leanings of ordinary French Jewish citizens. Their first choice candidate was Mr Zemmour who did not make the grade. Jewish establishment figures are in no way representative of the Jewish community.

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As expected, leftist Jews embraced him, even he's never been a friend of Israel nor Jews.

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